

# Interim finance director Steve Dunivent departs after four years with city

After four years with the City of Costa Mesa, Interim Finance Director Steve Dunivent is set to retire at the end of December.

"I love working with Steve Dunivent," City Manager Tom Hatch said. "He approaches issues as a strong professional but with a unique way of calming any discussions. He will be missed."

Dunivent began his career in 2013 during a transitional phase, which was expected to last for four months and lasted four years.

During that time, he helped achieve several key milestones, including securing a AA-plus bond rating from Standard & Poors for the Lions Park Projects bond sales, a five-year financial plan and several awards for the city's Comprehensive Annual Financial Review.

Originally from Wisconsin, Dunivent grew up in Illinois where he received his bachelor's degree in accounting before beginning his finance career in California. He spent 35 years with the County of Orange before retiring as Deputy Chief Executive Officer.

"My biggest accomplishment is the ability to be trusted by my boss or my bosses and having a positive influence on the people I work with." Dunivent said. Part of his accomplishments stem from his influences from his family, people from the Bible and pastors.

"My mantra is what would Steve do or say, before I do whatever I do, and it has made me a better person," Finance Executive

Secretary Kathy Ulrich said.

Dunivent has left an indelible mark on the City of Costa Mesa. His colleagues at City Hall agree that he leads with humility and works with relentless drive and in result has provided a great service to the city.

Once retired Dunivent plans to dedicate his attention towards two personal projects and catch up on some reading.

"It's time," Dunivent said.

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## **City launches new website to make Costa Mesa's budget more user friendly**

The City of Costa Mesa has launched a new interactive website called Open Budget Costa Mesa that will provide residents and city staff with financial data that is easily accessible and understandable.

[Click here to access Open Budget Costa Mesa.](#)

Rather than wading through hundreds of pages of scanned legal and financial documents, residents and city staff can now see financial data contextualized in charts, graphs, and visualizations that are attractive, navigable, and easy to understand. The information is available at various levels of detail and updated monthly.

"We are happy to provide the residents of Costa Mesa with this on-line tool that will make our city budget more user friendly," Mayor Sandy Genis said. "Residents can now create

their own charts, graphs and spreadsheets to pursue their own budget research and interests and do it during a set time frame.”

[Click here](#) for a video tutorial on how to use this new tool.

To launch the new site, the City of Costa Mesa’s Finance and Information Technology department’s partnered with Socrata, the leader in making existing government data discoverable, usable, and actionable for public servants and the people they serve.

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## **Communications Officer Ann Barrett presented with City Manager Leadership Award**

City Manager Tom Hatch named Communications Officer Ann Barrett as the recipient of his monthly Leadership Award at the employee Meet and Greet Thursday Dec. 7 at City Hall.

“Ann is known for her exemplary work ethic, commitment to service and professionalism as well as her dedication to the development of new communication officer trainees,” City Manager Hatch said. “She is viewed as a leader within the Telecommunications Unit and her co-workers rely on her knowledge and experience daily.”

Barrett began her career with the City of Costa Mesa in February of 2010, when she was hired as a communications officer. Prior to that she had worked the year before as a part time communications officer for the city of Downey.

But her experience in the field goes back even further. She

originally began her career as a dispatcher in 1981 with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department. She worked there for eight years and in 1989 left that job to raise her children.

During her seven years with the city, she has diligently applied herself to expanding her knowledge with the aim of providing the highest level of service to the public safety profession and the community. Regardless of the task assigned, Barrett approaches it with a very positive attitude.

In August of 2013, Barrett earned the title of communications training officer. This position is critical to the training of new employees.

Her experience in dispatch also helped police officers and detectives recently to solve what at first seemed like a call from an assault victim, but it was later discovered that the alleged victim had instead been involved in a homicide.

In addition to honoring Barrett, City Manager Hatch congratulated several new employees or newly promoted employees as well as four employees who are retiring. He also had a special recognition for outgoing Interim Finance Director Steve Dunivent, who is leaving the city at the end of December.

The new employees include Ellen Medalle, a new human resources analyst and from Economic and Development Services new hires include Ryan Bohr, building inspector, Courtney Harvey office specialist II, Sheila Larson, building technician, Kim Martinez intern and Aaron Thompson combination building inspector.

In the Parks & Community Services Department the new hires include Caitlin Knight recreation leader II, Amanda Mansfield recreation leader III, George Mosqueda recreation leader III and Vanessa Romero instructor guard.

Police Department new hires include Sarah Davila, crime scene

specialist, Danielle Whitehead police records technician and Oscar Nichols police aide and in the Public Services Department Elliot Huang assistant engineer was welcomed.

The newly promoted employees are Ameerah Ghaznavi management aide in the City Manager's Office, Jon Neal who has been promoted to assistant fire marshall, longtime employee Mike Tucker who moved from Code Enforcement to Parks and Community Services as a new management analyst and Catherine Pimentel, who was promoted as a new community service specialist for the Police Department.

Those honored for their retirements included Fire Captain Lenny Goodsir, who started his career in 1985 as a fire prevention intern, Ronald Penley who spent 28 years with the city as an equipment mechanic, Jody Gonzalez a police training assistant who started with Costa Mesa in 1987 and Liz Wright, a senior records technician who began her Costa Mesa career in 2004.

And finally, City Manager Hatch thanked Steve Dunivent for his four years of dedicated service to Costa Mesa. Dunivent took on the role of interim finance director in 2013 after retiring from the County of Orange, where he had a distinguished 30-year career.

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## **Mayor and city staff take an informational tour of Fairview Park wetlands**

Mayor Sandy Genis joined city staffers and the city's consultant biologist Barry Nerhus for a tour of the Fairview

Park wetlands on Thursday Nov. 30 to inspect the conditions of the habitat and water flows, and to further investigate the potential for mosquito breeding in the ponds.

The mayor was joined by Public Services Director Raja Sethuraman, Parks and Community Services Director Justin Martin, City Engineer Bart Mejia, Fairview Park Administrator Cynthia D'Agosta and Janet Hauser and Tony Dodero from the City Manager's Office.

The group spent the morning observing several things, including the flow of water to the park's five wetland ponds, local wildlife and habitats, native plants and vegetation, cattail removal efforts and evidence of debris and trash left in the ecosystem by transients.

Some of the wildlife observed by the group were white tail kites, osprey, falcons, turkey vultures, egrets, mallard ducks and other waterfowl. Also observed were northern harriers. The harriers have nested in the trees in the lowlands and there are only about a dozen nesting pairs in all of Orange County.

The total 23-acres of riparian habitat and wetland ponds were officially christened by the city in 2013 and was part of a decades-long plan to restore wetland areas in Fairview Park that was approved in 2003-2005 in the Fairview Park Master Plan.

The project called for restoring the native plant community

and habitat, building and grading wetland ponds and streams and installing an irrigation system to assist with the plant and tree growth.

The ponds capture storm runoff and flood control water and are designed to flow at a rate of 350 gallons a minute to be treated naturally and sustain the constructed habitat.

Recently, the ponds have been the subject of questions about how they impact the breeding of mosquitoes. City staff, Nerhus' crew, and Orange County Vector Control officials test the pond water frequently for mosquitoes. Several abatement measures have been put into place including adding mosquito fish to the pond and clearing cattail that inhibits water flow.



On Thursday, maintenance crews were busy at work clearing the cattails from one of the ponds with a goal of clearing the cattails from all the ponds prior to the next nesting season.

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# **Costa Mesa Fire Capt. Chris Coates honored with Randy Scheerer Memorial Award**

Costa Mesa Fire Capt. Chris Coates was recently presented with the Randy Scheerer Memorial Award at the Annual California Fire Chiefs Training Officers Symposium held in Fresno, California.

Capt. Coates was selected by Training Officers throughout the region for his dedication and outstanding service to the Orange County Fire Service. In addition to serving as Costa Mesa Fire & Rescue's Training Officer, Captain Coates also serves as the EMS Manager, Public Information Officer, and is finishing his term as the President for the Orange County Fire Chiefs Training Officers.

"Capt. Coates has done an outstanding job of developing our training programs and building on the wide range of talents on our team," Chief Dan Stefano said. "His dedication to building relationships and collaborating throughout the entire region for the greater good of the fire service and the community we serve has been an exceptional hallmark of his. There is no question that Capt. Coates embodies the essence of what the Randy Scheerer Memorial Award is all about."

The Randy Scheerer Memorial Award is dedicated to the memory of Newport Beach Fire Division Chief Randy Scheerer, who unexpectedly passed away in 2003. His contributions to the California fire service were so significant and the loss was



so great that both the Northern and Southern California Training Officers' Board of Directors unanimously agreed to establish and support an annual memorial remembrance award in honor of Chief Scheerer.

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## **Military Affairs Team is collecting toys for the city's adopted 1/5 Marine unit this Christmas**

The city of Costa Mesa and the Costa Mesa Military Affairs Team are currently seeking donations of new, unwrapped toys for the children of the city's adopted 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion 5<sup>th</sup> Marine Regiment.

The collected toys will be given to the children at the Marine unit's annual Christmas Carnival held at Camp Pendleton.

Donations can be dropped off at City Hall in the foot locker located in the first floor lobby until Friday, Dec. 8, 2017.

Since the 1/5 Marines are deployed and will not be able to celebrate Christmas with their families, the Christmas Carnival will help make the holiday season a little more festive for the children.



Children range in ages from newborn infants to teenagers. Donations of age appropriate educational toys, games, puzzles and books will be greatly appreciated. Suggestions for donations include:

- Ages 0 – 7 – Stuffed animals, dolls and accessories, action figures, outdoor toys
- Ages 8 and above – Sporting equipment, Legos, arts and crafts, hair accessories, baseball caps

For single male and female Marines, stockings are being requested and stocking stuffer donations including items such as:

1. Gift Cards
2. Toiletries
3. Socks
4. Video Games
5. Goodie Bags

For further information, please contact Assistant to the City Manager Dan Baker at (714) 754-5156.

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# **Arlington Drive road closure scheduled to begin Monday Nov. 27 as part of bioswale project**

As construction begins on the new Arlington Drive Improvement Project, Public Services announced that grading, roadway and storm drain construction is scheduled to start on Monday, Nov. 27, 2017, through March 15, 2018, closing the south half of Arlington Drive from Gate 5 at the OC Fairgrounds/west end of TeWinkle Park to Newport Boulevard.

Only westbound traffic will be allowed in this area, but two-way traffic on Arlington Drive between Fairview Road and Davis Magnet School will be maintained.

Residents are asked to please take a detour around the project site and use alternate routes for eastbound travel. City staff appreciates the public's patience and cooperation while the project is under construction.

The city has contracted with Sully-Miller Contracting Company to construct the Arlington Drive Improvements Project, which includes roadway improvements, new concrete multipurpose trail along the south side of Arlington Drive, new underground storm drain system, vegetated bioswale, and roadside beautification including new landscaping and water efficient irrigation systems.

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# City staff and residents of Fillmore-Coolidge neighborhood take part in clean-up event

One of the City Council's top priorities is to develop strategies to foster safer neighborhoods in our community.

It is well-understood that neighborhood blight creates a perception for residents that they have no control over their neighborhood and that it has become unsafe.

In line with the City Council's goals, Development Services' Community Improvement Division (CID) has developed a strategy in which its staff partners with local resident groups to help reverse this perception through education and a hands on approach.

On Saturday, Nov. 11, Community Improvement staff joined approximately 75-100 residents of the Fillmore-Coolidge neighborhood and hosted a community clean-up event. The Community Improvement staff worked side-by-side with residents cleaning up discarded materials in the public rights-of-way and identified blighted conditions.

In addition, Community Improvement staff setup an information booth manned by the area code officer, Heidi Jacinto, who emphasized the importance of her role as the code enforcement officer in the community and the usefulness of the Costa Mesa Connect App.

Specifically, Jacinto's goal was to empower residents to take control of their neighborhood by reporting those activities

which create blight such as illegal dumping and or deteriorated conditions.

The event was a huge success. Residents expressed gratitude and a feeling that they were not alone in their concerns for a better, safer neighborhood. Several indicated they felt more connected as a community through the event and that they were happy to put a friendly face on City government.

Huge thanks go out to the City's Parks and Community Services Department, whose mobile recreation van was onsite providing activities for the kids while parents helped during the clean-up, as well as to Ware Disposal, who provided two 40-cubic-yard containers that were full by the end of the event.

Finally, a huge thank you to our local Chick-fil-A restaurant for hosting lunch. Thank you all for partnering together to make Costa Mesa a safer place.

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## **Costa Mesa residents and business owners sought to serve on Animal Services Committee**

The Costa Mesa City Council is currently seeking residents and business owners to serve on the Animal Services Committee.

### **Animal Services Committee:**

This newly created committee will meet every other month and will provide the City with recommendations to improve animal care services throughout the city, including animal shelter

services and bark park amenities.

Currently there are seven (7) regular member vacancies and two (2) alternate member vacancies. Five of the applicants must be Costa Mesa residents. Two of the members must have special expertise in animal care, but do not need to be residents. This is an unpaid volunteer position. For further information, please contact City Clerk Brenda Green at (714) 754-5225.

**Application Process** – Residents and business owners who are interested in getting involved in local government are encouraged to complete a Committee Application Form from the City Clerk's Office or from the City's website ([www.costamesaca.gov/apply](http://www.costamesaca.gov/apply)).

The completed application may be submitted online; mailed to Costa Mesa City Clerk at Post Office Box 1200, Costa Mesa, California, 92628-1200; faxed to (714) 754-4942; emailed to [cityclerk@costamesaca.gov](mailto:cityclerk@costamesaca.gov); or hand-delivered to the City Clerk's Office at City Hall, 77 Fair Drive, Costa Mesa.

The deadline is **5 p.m., Wednesday, Dec. 13, 2017**. Appointments are tentatively scheduled for the Jan. 16, 2018 City Council meeting.

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## **New hires for Costa Mesa Police Department brings total officers to 125**

Costa Mesa Police Department recruitment efforts are paying off as the department added six new officers, one lateral hire

and five OC Sheriff Academy graduates, that brings the staffing numbers up to 125 sworn officers.

"I want to thank those from the city and police department recruiting staff who have worked so diligently to add new officers to our department as we rebuild and prepare for the future," Chief Rob Sharpnack said. "These new hires will be so critical as we tackle important city priorities and expand our specialty assignments."

Joining the department last week was Officer Orlando Lopez, formally of the Fullerton Police Department, where he has been employed since October of 2013. Lopez is the fifth Fullerton officer to recently come over to Costa Mesa.



In Fullerton, he was a Senior Officer and has worked in Crime Scene Investigation and recently received a letter of commendation for his work on a vehicle burglary case.

Lopez decided to pursue a career in law enforcement and in 2007 he applied for and got the job as Correctional Deputy Trainee for the Riverside County Sheriff's Department where he worked for three years.

Then in February 2011, he graduated from the 183rd Riverside County Sheriff's Basic Academy and he worked in correctional facilities before joining the Fullerton Police Department.

In addition to officer Lopez, the five new academy graduates

are Jeremiah Stanley, Jacob Schulze, Arturo Montoya, Michael Luu and Richard Lippincott. The five graduates were honored and recognized at the Class No. 228 academy graduation on Tuesday Nov. 7. Lippincott was named the sergeant of that graduating class.

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## **More than 100 artists to take part in the third annual ARTventure**

The City of Costa Mesa's third annual juried art exhibition, ARTventure, has practically doubled in the size of participants with more than 100 local artists entered in this year's event and nearly 250 pieces of artwork, in addition to student artwork from local Newport-Mesa Unified School District students.

Taking place at SoCo, The Mix and the Design Within Reach showroom, the event will kickoff on Friday Nov. 10 and is scheduled to run from 5 to 9 p.m. that night. An award ceremony for the artists will take place at 7 p.m. that night.

The second day of the event on Saturday Nov. 11 will take place from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

For the event, art is carefully paired with furniture, fixtures, and interior design elements, along with live entertainment featuring musical, theatrical, literary and culinary forms to heighten the artistic experience.

In addition to the work of the artists there will be an opening reception, live musical entertainment, free food and



beverages, an awards ceremony and plenty of activities throughout the two-day event.

This event is a project spearheaded by the Cultural Arts Committee and planned with the Parks & Community Services Department team. For more information and to RSVP to this event go to [www.artventurecm.com](http://www.artventurecm.com).

### **See Schedule of Events Below:**

#### **Friday Evening:**

- 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Exhibit open
- 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. Reception featuring:
- Beverages and food/dessert tray pass provided by Bistro Papillote
- Dylan Romaine Band courtesy of Segerstrom Center of the Arts
- Gift basket drawing – proceeds benefit the Cultural Arts Committee's Grant Program

#### **Saturday:**

- 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Exhibit open
- 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.:
- Art activation hosted by Wunderkid – paints and papers courtesy of Farrow and Ball
- Wine bottle painting hosted by Inspired Art & Wine
- Ceramics demonstration hosted by Costa Mesa Ceramics
- Drop-in and Draw – Art activation hosted by Chuck Jones Center for Creativity
- Live music courtesy of Vanguard University
- Breakfast tasting bar provided by Greenleaf Gourmet Chopshop
- Juice bar tastings provided by Birdie Bowl & Juicery
- 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Performance by Festival Ballet Theater
- 11:45 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. The Dollybirds Band courtesy of Segerstrom Center of the Arts

- 12:00 p.m. to 5 p.m.:
  - Art activation hosted by Wunderkid – paints and papers courtesy of Farrow and Ball
  - Tote bag stamping with artist Matt Allen
  - Adult Doodle Bar & Kids Art hosted by Chuck Jones Center for Creativity
  - Live music courtesy of Vanguard University
  - Afternoon tastings bar hosted by Farm & Culture Co.
  - Lunch tasting bar provided by Greenleaf Gourmet Chopshop
  - 3:15 p.m. to 5 p.m. Pretty Good Time Band courtesy of Segerstrom Center of the Arts
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## **Costa Mesa Fire & Rescue's Jon Neal promoted to Assistant Fire Marshal**

Jon Neal, Costa Mesa Fire & Rescue's Code Enforcement Officer, has been promoted to the position of Assistant Fire Marshal.

He began his formal assignment on Monday, Oct. 30. This new position was approved during the FY 2017-18 budget process, taking the place of the Fire Protection Analyst position, and it is in-line with the goals and objectives established within the department's Strategic Plan 2015-2020.

"We look forward to Jon's leadership role increasing as our Assistant Fire Marshal," Chief Dan Stefano said. "The range and depth of Jon's skill sets and experience that he has demonstrated serving our country, in different industry sectors, and within the City of Costa Mesa are tremendous

assets for our organization. We have an incredibly talented and hardworking team who is redefining what effectiveness and efficiency look like when innovation is infused as a core value within that framework and Jon embodies that mindset.”

Neal’s commitment to public service began when he enlisted in the United States Coast Guard immediately after high school, where he served as a firefighter on the USCGC Alert, a 210-foot cutter, among other assignments. Upon completion of his active duty in 2004, Neal worked as the inventory control manager for three years at Active Ride Shop, which was followed by his service in Gulu, Uganda, as a logistics manager for Invisible Children, a non-profit organization.

Neal joined the Fire & Rescue team in 2015 in the Community Risk Reduction (CRR) Division and he has done an outstanding job of serving in a number of areas ever since, from fire and life safety to plan review to code adoption and much more.

His initial work in Costa Mesa began in 2008, when he was hired as the city’s storekeeper, working in the Corporation Yard warehouse. Thereafter, as part of the organization’s restructuring, Neal went on to fill a range of vacant positions within the Public Services Department Maintenance Services Division.

In 2012, he was promoted to Code Enforcement Officer in the Community Improvement Division where he was tasked with coordinating and leading the multi-agency Hotel/Motel Taskforce, which also included presenting cases to the Planning Commission and City Council that led to C.U.P. revocations.

Neal has also earned a number of California State Fire Marshal Certifications and is nearing completion of his Bachelor’s Degree in Fire Science Management from American Military University.